Rhymney
via Cardiff.

March 17/95

Dear Sir;

I enclose you a copy of my report for the Rhymney Urban District for year 1894.

Yours truly
T. H. Redwood

Rhymney Urban

Gentlemen.

The population of your district in 1894, calculated on the difference between the Census of 1881 and that of 1891 (the usual way for districts of this size) was about 7762, which is probably below the truth, as some of those who left the place at the closing of the Steel Works have returned, many strangers, working underground, have been imported, and nearly all the houses are occupied, some being overcrowded.

Part I. A tabular statement of sickness and mor=
=tality within your district tabulated according to diseases, ages, and localities.

The general sickness was throughout the year, much heavier than for several years past. In the first quarter, in addition to the ordinary ailments - severe colds, &c - Measles and Whooping-cough were very prevalent in the middle and Upper parts of your district. In this quarter, too, the epidemic of Influen=za of the previous year came to an end, 63 cases having occurred with no death. In the second quarter, excluding Measles and Whooping-cough of the former of which there were a large number of cases, the sickness was comparatively light, but began to increase in the third, becoming heavy towards the end, diarrhoea, due to over-indulgence in fruit, &c, and chiefly amongst children, being very prevalent, especially in August & September. Towards the end of the year the sickness, main=
=ly in the form of Catarrhs & bronchitis amongst children and particularly in the Upper Rhym=
=ney part of your district, became heavier than at all. In this, the last quarter, and in the same part of your district, there were several cases of

Influenza amongst adults, which, however, al=
=though, in some, severe at first, only lasted a few
days, not leaving the debility usually following
that disease; and a severe epidemic amongst
children, complicated with the bronchitis mentioned
above, several hundred cases having occurred
in the last five or six weeks of the year.
The number of births registered during the year
was 259 (125 males & 134 females) making the
birth-rate 33.36 per 1000 per annum, which is
lower than that for the preceding year, but not be=
=low the average.
The number of successful vaccinations under
1 year of age was 195, leaving 64 to be accounted
for by death, &c, this being an improvement on
the year before. As several were postponed on
account of ill health the number unvaccinated
through neglect was probably not large.
The total number of deaths was 184 (84 males, & 100
females) which gives a general death-rate, for the
year, of 23.70 per 1000 per annum, this being
about the average, for your district, of the last
10 years, and a little higher than that for 1893.
This comparatively high rate was due entirely
to the very excessive number of deaths (106, 50
from preventable Zymotic diseases) of children
under 5 years of age, the rates under 1, and un=
=der 5, respectively, having been 7.85 — or over
231 per 1000 births — & 13.65. Excluding the deaths
from Measles and Whooping-cough, and those
due to improper feeding (the large majority
of the infants of young women being now-a-
days artificially fed instead of as provided and
ordained by nature, to the injury of both Mother

& child) and want of care, the death-rate under 1 & 5 would have been 3.87 & 5.92, and, if the deaths from diseases of the lungs caused by exposure to the weather and draughts (21) were less the rates would be still fur=
=ther be reduced.

The Zymotic death-rate was 6.95 (excessively high) against 2.57 in 1893, & the rate from phthisis 1.28, which is slightly below that for the preceding year. Of the total deaths 54 were due to Zymotic diseases— diphtheria 1, scarlet-fever 1, measles 16, Whooping-cough 33, puerperal fever 2, and diarrhoea 1—; against 19 the year before; 22 to constitutional diseases, phthisis, syphilis and cancer; 19 (3 alcoholic) to diseases of the nervous system, against 32; 13 to diseases of the heart, 1 the result of acute rheumatism 11 years ago; 35 to inflammatory diseases of the lungs and air passages—21 of these under 5 years of age—a=
=gainst 43; 8 to diseases of the digestive organs, 4 under 1 year of age; 3 to diseases of the urinary organs, 1 alcoholic and 1 under 1; 1 to diseases pecu=
=liar to women—3 including the 2 puerperal men=
=tioned above; 3 to accident; 1 to drowning; and the rest to senile decay and congenital debility. Between the ages of 15 & 25 there were only 3 deaths during the year, and, between 5 & 15, 12 against 3, 1 of these having been due to scarlet fever, 3 to tuber=
=cular disease, 2 to diseases of the heart, and 2 to accident.

Table of prevailing weather, sickness, &c, in each month of the year.

Month	Weather	Prevailing sickness	No: cases & deaths Zymotic cases	Zymotic deaths	disease cases	disease deaths
January	Cold, snow, fog	Quinsy. Ac: Rh: Influenza	5. 2.	44.		
	Wet & rough	Scarlat: Measles. Pertussis	3. 8.	39	0. 0.	3.
February	Wet. gales	Quinsy. Influenza	8.	17.		
	Frost. Finer	Scarlat: Measles. Diph: Pertussis	1. 20. 4. 2	10	0. 3. 0.	5.

March	Rough. Wet	Quinsy. Ac: Rh:	Influenza	5.	1.	5.
	Fine. Frost.	Measles. Pertussis.	Erysipelas	55.	165. 1.	3. 9. 0.
April	Fine. Cold. rough	Quinsy.		4		
	Dull. Showers.	Measles.	Pertussis	172.	59.	2. 4
May	Dull. rough.	Quinsy.		10.		
	Snow. Finer	Scarlat: Measles. Rothelu.	Pertussis	3. 225.	3. 10.	0. 7. 0. 3.
June	Wet. dull.	Quinsy.		11.		
	Warm. Wet.	Measles. Rothelu.	Pertussis	46. 3.	4.	3. 0. 0.
July	Warm Showers	Quinsy.		16.		
	Dull. Fine.	Scarlat: Typhoid. Rothelu:	Pertuss:	1. 1. 1.	0.	0. 0. 0. 2
August	Dull. Wet.	Quinsy. Diar:		24.	36.	
	Fine Warm	Scarlat: diph: Measles. Rothelu		2. 2.	1. 4.	0. 1. 0. 0.
September	Showers. Fine	Quinsy. Diar:	Mumps.	18.	24. 3.	
	Dull. Wet	Scarlat:	Pertussis	1.	6.	0. 1.
October	Dull. Close	Quinsy. Diar:	Varicella	14.	50. 16.	
	Frost. Wet rough	Scarlat: Rothelu.	Pertussis	4.	2. 12.	
November	Wet. rough.	Quinsy. Diar:	Influenza +	8.	10.	
	Dull & cold	Scarlat: Rothelu.		2.	1.	
December	Raw. Foggy.	Quinsy.	Influenza +	7		
	Gales. Wet.	Scarlat:	Pertussis	2.	2.	

+ Epidemic Influenza amongst children, several hundred cases during last 5 or 6 weeks & a few scattered ones amongst adults, Upper Rhymney part of district.

Part II – A summary of action for preventing the spread of disease.

Typhoid fever. 1 case only, in July, at 23, High St:, probably (no doubt) caused by untrapped drain, communicating with sewer, at back, which was re=ported to your Inspector at the time and put right at once.

Diphtheria – 6 cases and 1 death, 2 in January, 2 in February, 1 in July, & 1 in August, and all inde=pendent of each other – none due to infection. 2 oc=curred in badly ventilated, badly drained, slope

dwellings; 2 in houses built on refuse-sodden ground; 1 in a house with badly drained cowshed at back; and 1 where no serious sanitary defect could be found. The following table gives particulars of each case.

Date	Locality	Cases under 5	Cases over 5	Deaths under 5	Deaths over 5	Sanitary Condition	action taken
Jan: 27.	Opposite Prince		1			Cowshed back. No proper drain	None
— 27.	Bk. Old Prince		1			No drain, badly ventilated	None
Feb: 5.	95, High St:		1			Nothing definite.	None
— 7.	6. Robertstown Row		1			Refuse sodden ground	None
July 29.	17. Clarendon Row		1			do	None
Aug: 30.	42. Plantation St:	1		1		Unhealthy slope dwelling	Condemned for families
	Totals	1.	5.	1.			

Scarlet fever. 16 cases and 1 death. The first 2 cases, in January, which occurred in Forge & Plantation Sts:, were due to previous ones in neighbourhood, and the 3rd, in February, to one of these. After this there were no cases until May, when 3 cropped up, all infected from Pontlottyn, and all in the lower part of your district. The rest — 1 in July, 2 in August, 1 in September, 2 in October, 2 in November, & 2 in December — were in the lower and middle parts of district, & all due to the where the disease same source — Pontlottyn, in the Gelligaer Rural district, where the disease was more or less prevalent throughout the year, and between which place and your district there is constant communication — In one or two cases an attempt was made to have the children removed to the Isolation Hospital, but the parents refused their consent, showing the advisability of making such removal compulsory, if considered necessary by the Medical Officer of Health. The usual means, short of hospital isolation, were adopted to prevent the spread of the disease from these cases, and the houses in which they occurred disinfected as thoroughly as circum-

=stances would permit.

Table of Scarlet fever cases.

Date	District	cases under 5	cases over 5	deaths under 5	deaths over 5	Origin	Remarks
January	Upper						
	Middle						
	Lower		2		1 x	Previous cases in neighbourhood	x Diphtheritic
February	Upper						
	Middle						
	Lower	1				Previous case, same house	
May	Upper						
	Middle						
	Lower		3			Pontlottyn	
July	Upper						
	Middle						
	Lower	1				Pontlottyn	
August	Upper						
	Middle						
	Lower	1	1			24, Forge Street	
September	Upper						
	Middle		1			Pontlottyn	
	Lower						
October	Upper						
	Middle						
	Lower	2					
November	Upper						
	Middle	1	1				1 diphtheritic
	Lower						
December	Upper						
	Middle						
	Lower		2			Pontlottyn	1 anginose
	Totals	6.	10.	0.	1.		

All, except first 3, were directly or indirectly, infected from Pontlottyn, in 11 ertwyn Typhoid Rural (Gellipaer) district.

Measles. 527 cases and 18 deaths, 2 of these secondary and registered as Whooping cough and 1 Meningitis respectively. During the last quarter

of 1893, this disease was very prevalent in the lower part of your district, having been brought from the Vale and introduced into the Infant Schools. These Schools were closed and the epidemic rapidly subsided, so that there were only 8 cases – 2 in upper, 3 in middle, and 3 in lower parts – in the whole district in January 1894. In February, however, it started in the upper and middle parts, and, through the schools, became epidemic, in the upper, including Llechryd, es= =pecially. At your March meeting I recommended the closing of the Upper Rhymney, and Bute Town (in the Merthyr Tydfil Rural district) schools un= =til the 19th but, as the disease was still prevalent at Llechryd at that date, the closing of the latter schools was extended. In April a number of children recov= =ering – some suffering – from the disease were col= =lected in the upper Rhymney Board schools for the Examinations, the consequence being that the schools were so thoroughly infected that it was no use attempting to prevent its spread through them. In April and May, therefore, 272 cases & 7 deaths occurred in that district. During the same month 121 cases and 2 deaths occurred in connection with the middle schools, and, on the 25th (May) on my recommendation, those schools were closed for a month, with the effect that what was rapidly becoming a serious epidemic rapidly subsided. By the end of June the epidemic in the upper part burned itself out, and there has been only 1 doubtful (probably Rothelin) case since in the whole of your district. The above history demonstrates most forcibly the influence schools have in the spread of Measles, and the fact that closing them for a month at least is the only effectual way of

checking it.

Table of Measles cases.

Month	District	cases under 5	cases over 5	deaths under 5	deaths over 5	Origin, &c.	Weather
January	Upper	2					Cold, snow
	Middle	3					Foggy. Wet. rough
	Lower	3				Schools	
February	Upper	8	3	2		Upper schools.	Wet & rough
	Middle	7	2	1		Jenkins Row.	Frost, finer
	Lower						
March	Upper	28	12	1		Bute Town & Upper Board schools.	Roughs Wet
	Middle	7	8	2		Schools	Finer, frost.
	Lower						
April	Upper	99	38	2		Schools.	Fine, cold, rough
	Middle	21	12			Schools.	Showery
	Lower	2				Upper schools	
May	Upper	111	24	5		Upper Schools	Dull, rough
	Middle	68	20	2		Schools.	Snow.
	Lower	2					Finer
June	Upper	16	3	1		Schools.	Wet & dull
	Middle	20	7	2		Schools.	Warm, wet
	Lower						
August	Upper						Dull - wet
	Middle	1				Probably Rotheln simulating measles	Fine & warm
	Lower						
	Totals.	398.	129.	18.	0.		

Roseola, or German measles. 15 cases, between May and November, all but 6 in upper Plymouth part of district, and 8 in connection with Upper Board Schools.

Table of Roseola cases.

Date	Locality	cases under 5	cases over 5	Source of infection
May 2	2. Ice Evans	1	2	Doubtful character & origin
June 3.	31. High Street	1	1	
June 14	55, [illegible] High Street		1	Upper Board Schools.

July 20	61. Upper High Street		1	Upper Board Schools.
Aug. 1	" "		1	Previous case.
— 8	55. "	1		—
— 12	Church Villa	1		Upper Schools
— 21	11. Manest. Street		1	Unknown.
Oct. 16	Havards Row		2	
— 21	14. Jenkins Row		1	
Nov. 28	Brynbryth	1		Unknown.
	Totals	5.	10	

Hooping cough. About 500, or more, (probably many more) cases, and 33 deaths, the large majority in the first and beginning of second, quarters of year, and in the upper portion of district. In the fourth quarter the disease broke out again in the same district, but the cases were scattered, and not numerous – about 20. The school attendance officer was informed of these, as they came under notice, so that children from those houses might be excluded.

Diarrhoea, 120, or more, cases, all ages, but chiefly children, in August, September, & October, & most of them due to over indulgence in fruit &c.

Puerperal fever. 5 or 6 cases, and 2 deaths, in course of year, and all due to want of care or cleanliness on part of mid-wife.

Acute Rheumatism – 3 cases, in first quarter, & in damp houses.

Erysipelas – 1 case, facial, in March, at 9, Moriah St.

Quinsy. About 130 in course of year, most of them in July, August, September, & October, & some severe and aggravated, if not caused, by unhealthy surroundings.

Chicken pox – 16 cases in October.

Mumps – 3 cases in September –

Before leaving this part of my report I would

mention that the fitting up of the disinfecting Chamber near the Isolation Hospital has not yet been completed.

Part III, General sanitary condition of, and improvements carried out in, district during year, together with an account of enquiries made as to conditions injurious to health existing in district, and of the proceedings relating to such conditions in which your Medical Officer has taken part or advised.

The general sanitary condition of your district - except in matter of a proper system of drainage and sewage disposal, to which you have not yet been able to give serious consideration - has been greatly improved, as the following list of the more important works that have been carried out during the year will show.

1. New main drains - at Rhymney Bridge, to carry off storm water that used to run over & damage the road; in Church St.; opposite Yard Row, causing what was a great and dangerous nuisance; and at the Clarence.
2. House drains improved - from 2 to 10 Pennel Row, and at 19, Upper High St: 6, Yard Row, & 18 Church St:.
3. Paving, kurbing, & Channelling, Carno St:, Lawn Terrace, Thomas's Row (a great & much needed improvement); Upper half of Forge St:; & part of the St:
4. Structural improvements to houses in Carno St:, Brynhyfryd Row, Rowles Square, & Forge St:.
5. Road widened and improved - along Clarence Row (another great & badly wanted improvement); the Church end of Church St:, making the road much safer for Vehicles; & at corner of Lawn Terrace.

163 notices for removal of nuisances were served during the year, and all duly attended to.

Scavenging. This work was not done as well as in the preceding year, especially in the upper Rhymney part of your district, and I would recommend that you have a clear understanding with the Contractor as to what refuse his men are supposed to remove, as I have heard more than one dispute between householders and one of them on the subject, the man asserting that it was not his duty to re=move anything except ashes. Some steps should, also, be taken to prevent the nuisance (to which your attention has been called before) caused by waste paper flying about the streets especially the lower end of High St.

The water supply was satisfactory both in quan=tity and quality — I had no serious complaint as to either — but the people at the upper end of Princetown, through the action of a section of the ratepayers of that district who would not have been benefited by the bringing of the water, in pipes, down to the roadside as proposed by the late Local Board, are still without a proper and convenient supply.

Dwellings. At your August meeting I drew attention to the "double houses," of which there are about 100 (4 rows) in your district, & in which there had been a good deal of sickness, aggravated, if not caused, by their unhealthy condition through want of proper ventilation; also to some of the houses in Rowles Square — and underneath, & slope, dwel=lings in other parts of the place, which are unfit for occupation, especially by families, for the same reason; and you instructed your Surveyor to visit all dwellings of the kind in the district, and ascertain the number of occu=

parts, and their ages, in each. He did so, and drew ~~up a report on the subject, which I looked over, and from which it appeared that there were 288 more or less unhealthy dwellings of the kind.~~ up a report on the subject, which I looked over, and from which it appeared that there are 288 more or less unhealthy dwellings of the kind, that 24, be=
=sides being unhealthy, were so seriously over crowd=
=ed as to require immediate attention, & 8 absolutely unfit for human habitation. Notices were served on the owners & occupiers of these, the worst exam=
=ples, the overcrowding abated in a few only, & one or two of the absolutely unfit vacated, & it will be necessary for further action to be taken in regard to the rest. In the case of the double houses the only effec=
=tual remedy is to throw the two — back & front — into one, and the underneath & slope dwellings should be added to, or thrown into, the houses of which they really form a part, or tenanted (the best of them) by adults, not more than 2 in each, only.

Closet accommodation. I find that there are still some houses not properly supplied in this respect, — at Râsbrynoer & Llechryd for example — and di=
=rect your attention to the fact.

The dairies and Cowsheds have been visited twice during the year, and the bakehouses and slaughterhouses once a quarter, and your In=
=spector reports that he found all in a satisfac=
=tory condition.

Schools. The sanitary condition of the schools was satisfactory, and no contagious disease, such as ringworm or ophthalmia, prevalent in any of them.

Special visits. All houses in which cases of infectious disease, especially typhoid fever, diphtheria, & scarlet fever, were visited by both your Inspector & myself, & all parts of the

district inspected at different times, and any nuisance discovered attended to, and steps taken for their removal, as soon, & as far, as possible. In some instances, however, your Inspector had to serve notices &c, repeatedly, before anything was done. No special visits were made by me in the ordinary sense of the term — requiring entry in the "Visitation," & "Applications," books, but, in the course of the year, I had to draw your special attention to the following places & matters.

1. No; 3, Carno St:, unfit for occupation through dilapidated floor, which was then — after several previous complaints — repaired.
2. Choked grating between Red House & Carno Pit Rows, causing flooding in heavy rains.
3. Drain at bottom of Goshen St:, which was a serious & constantly recurring, nuisance. After many abortive attempts this was, at last, put right.
4. The double, underneath, and slope, houses referred to further back.
5. Two houses at Llechryd, no; 11, and one under the bridge, both very damp & injurious to health in their their condition.
6. The closets at the upper end of Brynhyfryd Row, some of which were in a very unsatisfactory condition for want of repairs, &c.

In conclusion, the points in the foregoing report that most particularly require consideration are — 1 — The excessively high death-rate of infants and of children (including infants) under 5 years of age, largely due, in the case of infants, to improper and careless feeding — withholding their natural food — and, in the case of those over 1

year, to the infectious and preventable diseases measles and Whooping cough.

2 The double, underneath, & slope, dwellings that are still over crowded, or occupied when unfit for human habitation. — 3 — Houses without proper closet accommodation — 4 — The scavenging, especially in the upper Rhymney part of district. — 5 — The waste paper nuisance — 6 — The completion of the fitting up of the disinfecting chamber near the Isolation Hospital.

I am, gentlemen
Your obedient servant
T. Hall Redwood M.D.
Medical Officer of Health

March 6/95.

P.S.

As there are a considerable number of people, living in your district who work at New Tredegar & are attended by their own medical man, I would recommend you to adopt the Notification of Infectious diseases Act, in order that cases of infectious disease not attended by me or my Assistants may be duly reported.

T.H.R.